

David Hauck: This house is about 85 years old. We aren't exactly sure. It was built sometime between 1914 and 1923. And when my wife and I were looking for a house back in the mid '80s, we really wanted to find an older house, one that had a lot of charm, a lot of character, in a community that, uh, had a lot of places where you could walk to and was also close to public transportation.

But part of the problem with finding an old, charming house is also that it tended to be less energy efficient. We were fortunate, though, because in addition to looking for a charming house, we also wanted one with a lot of light. So, even though we weren't thinking of energy efficiency, we were looking for houses that, uh, faced the south. So, I was probably one of the few people back in 1985 going around to open houses with a compass in my hand, checking the orientation of the house.

I was not always that interested in energy efficiency. Really, my wife was the first one who started pushing us about two, two and a half years ago -- late 2005, early 2006 -- saying that we really needed to do more to, uh, become more energy efficient around the house. You think about energy efficiency in your -- in your boiler, in your -- in your furnace, uh, in your refrigerator. What you're really talking about is the energy that comes in -- the natural gas that comes in, the electricity that comes in -- what percent of that gets changed into what you want?

One of the first things we did, we had a 15-year-old refrigerator, and it was time to replace it, so my wife really said let's -- let's really look for a high efficiency, Energy Star rated refrigerator. The new Energy Star refrigerator was delivered in October, and in November, when I would have expected my electric bill to go up because of winter and, you know, shorter days, more need for lighting, in fact the electric bill went significantly down.

That was my aha moment. The only thing we had changed was putting in the new refrigerator, and the impact was immediate and obvious on our electric bill. Comparing 2006 to 2007, uh, where the only thing I changed was three appliances -- the old refrigerator and two window air conditioners -- and I saved close to 1,300 kilowatt-hours, which is almost \$170 a year.